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A

MISSIONARY SERMON,

DELIVERED AT

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ON THE EVENING OF MAY 14, 1811.

BY

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PSALM LXXIV. 20.

Have respect unto the covenant: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.

WERE the argument, here expressed and urged, rightly understood and suitably felt, all Zion would unite in the prayer with which this passage commences. And permit me to remark, that there is not a child of God upon earth, who does not, in some measure, realize, in his own experience, the spirit which dictated these words of the Psalmist. The pious Asaph had beheld, with emotions not easily described or uttered, the distresses which had prevailed among the people of God, and the desolation to which his sanctuary had long been subjected. The ravages of God's enemies had spread consternation and woe all around; the people of the Lord were dispersed; their places of public worship destroyed, and their religious establishments deranged. Nothing was present to their view but the prospect of increasing calamity, and they had no hope but from the mercy and faithfulness of that God whom they had often provoked, and whose goodness they had long abused. Their enemies had not only "burnt up all the "synagogues of God in the land," but they were meditating an entire overthrow of the people who had occupied them for religious purposes. "They said in their hearts, Let us destroy them "together." And the Psalmist further observes: "The tumult "of those that rise up against thee increaseth continually." Under these circumstances we readily perceive that the church or the people of God were not only in a perilous, but in a depressed and suffering state.

The holy penman of this Psalm, deeply interested by what he had seen and felt, betakes himself to that first of all duties which good people should scrupulously perform at all times, and especially in a day of adversity. He was an earnest pleader with God in behalf of an oppressed and overwhelmed people. The favor he requests is apposite to the case he has in view; and the argument he uses exactly suited to excite commiseration and procure relief.—In the text and context he states and urges the matter in a most pathetic and importunate manner. His address to God, through the whole, is sublime, appropriate and forcible; but in no part do the energies of his soul rise to an higher pitch, or flow forth in a more majestic style, than in that comprehensive petition which forms the basis of our present meditations. Here is introduced an argument addressed to the feeling and sense of propriety which are supposed to exist in the Being to whom application is made. It is reminding him of his own declarations and engagements; from which a confidence is gathered that he will not deviate so as to manifest either forgetfulness, disregard or unfaithfulness. With the boldness therefore of an earnest intercessor, the Psalmist moves God to "have respect unto the cove-"nant:" then he enforces his plea with an argument addressed to the mercy or compassion of God: "for, says he, the dark "places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty." This plea and this argument are not without their appropriate significancy and pertinency at the present day. Brethren of our common Lord, my design is to engage you all in the prayer which opens and constitutes the theme of the present discourse. We are assembled this evening before God to contemplate the condition of those destitute of the privileges in which we all rejoice, and by which we are distinguished above most of our brethren of the human race; and also to consider what duties we owe to the God of our salvation, as it respects the diffusion among others of that light with which we are surrounded, and those blessings with which we are replenished. Can there be an indifferent attendant in the house of God, who regards, with no sensible emotion, the object which our meeting together professedly embraces? If such an one hath passed over the threshold of the sanctuary, and is now within these sacred walls, the Lord have mercy to open his eyes and penetrate his heart, before he leaves his seat, that he

may not be alone, and feel no interest in that prayer which is to warm the hearts and enliven the desires of all present who love these abodes of Zion. May God preside, and by his Holy Spirit operate in directing every eye, and lifting up every soul to himself. I shall,

I. Speak of the covenant which God hath seen fit to establish.

II. Consider what is comprehended in his having *respect* to this covenant.

III. I shall lead you to contemplate the argument by which his respect to this covenant is urged.

IV. I shall apply the subject.

That we may proceed in an orderly and intelligible manner, we are,

I. To take into view that covenant which God hath seen fit to establish.

It may be observed, that the phrase here used is in a definite form : " Have respect to *the* covenant," as if it was but one, and was understood as having reference to a particular object. I suppose, however, it may be considered as having a general meaning, and pointing, in one comprehensive view, to all those communications which God hath been pleased to make unto men relative to his designs of mercy towards our apostate and fallen race.

If the expression must be considered as limited in its signification, I shall strenuously contend that it means the covenant of redemption, that covenant of the Most High, with his Son, in which he promises to give him the heathen for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession. In the benefits of this covenant, all the children of God have a most liberal share ; and in it are contained all the promises of good which God hath made to his people, both in reference to their own personal security and happiness, and also in relation to that display of his mercy which he will make to the world of mankind in sending the gospel to the remotest ends of the earth, and in causing it to triumph in the conversion and salvation of souls, and in the enlargement and purification of the church. The promises are numerous, particu-

lar and animating in regard to the prosperity of Zion. The time is coming when religion shall more generally and gloriously prevail—when irreligion, idolatry and wickedness, shall be done away, and when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas.

Such a time is described and predicted in the word of God. Nor are these predictions in a blind and unintelligible form; but they are delivered in language plain, and the import of which cannot easily be mistaken. They are communicated by various writers, at different times, and in a variety of language. They are repeated time after time, and made familiar to the weakest understanding in those who are enlightened by the Spirit of God, and who have their senses exercised to discern spiritual things in a spiritual manner. To rehearse them would be to exhibit before you a considerable proportion of the prophetic writings. And after all, they would serve only to establish one idea which is sufficiently confirmed by the uniform tenor of Scripture, that God hath promised to protect and enlarge his church—to increase the number of converts, and raise them to an high degree of purity and felicity. Perhaps it may be sufficient to remark, that the prophet Isaiah, in an early part of his prophecy, expressly declares in reference to these times, Isa. ii. 2. "And it shall come to pass in the "last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be estab- "lished in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above "the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it."—In a similar strain the prophet Habakkuk hath also declared, "For the earth shall "be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the "waters cover the sea."—That remarkable passage in Zechariah, which breathes the same spirit, and corroborates the same idea, deserves to be mentioned, "In that day shall there be upon the bells "of the horses, HOLINESS TO THE LORD."—The best commentators have ever understood this as referring to a very flourishing state of religion in the world, when all the implements in use for labor or convenience among men, shall be devoted to God, and employed in his service. An attentive reader of divine revelation must know that a multitude of passages, which harmonize in sentiment, and proclaim the same glorious truth, might easily be collected. Permit me only to subjoin those comforting words of the Saviour, Matt. xvi. 18. "And I say also unto thee that thou art Peter;

"and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of "hell shall not prevail against it." You see, my brethren, by the brief statement which I have given, what I understand by the covenant spoken of in the text. To this covenant, comprehending these refreshing and enlivening promises, the pious Asaph prays that God would have respect.—We pass then to consider,

II. What is intended by this prayer.

To have respect to any one is, to treat him with marks of attention, which betoken an high sense of his worth and importance. We cannot respect that, which we despise, and consider of no value. There must be an opinion of some dignity and value in the person or thing respected. Now to respect a promise denotes some practical attention to the fulfilment of it. No one who makes a declaration which concerns another, and by which expectations are raised, can be considered as respecting the truth if he pays no further attention to the business, and takes no measures to accomplish his word. Write that man a liar, who says and *does not*. But the man who is punctual and faithful to his engagments—who conscientiously regards his promises, and though "he sweareth to his own hurt changeth not,"—must be considered as a man who *respects* the truth; and particularly respects his own promise. Now let us apply this to the case before us. God is requested to *respect the covenant;* that is, to have regard, even a practical regard to the declarations he hath made, and the promises he hath given respecting his church. The thing requested is, that God would not tarnish his own glory by being unfaithful or remiss; that he would not destroy or weaken the confidence placed in him by being indifferent towards his word, or by delaying the accomplishment of any of his promises. But that he would cause his government exactly to accord with his own pre-concerted and pre-announced purposes; that he would not, in short, pass by any particular comprehended in the covenant into which he hath freely and graciously entered, but in the fullest sense, and in the most perfect manner, make good his word by fulfilling this declaration, "My counsel shall stand, and "I will do all my pleasure."

It is not to be supposed that the pious author of the Psalm doubted of the faithfulness of God; but he was solicitous that

this faithfulness should be made to appear, that God's character might be unimpeached, and at the same time that the highest good and most effectual security of his people be rendered certain. God permits his children to address him in this manner, and to plead with him his own promises. Beseeching him therefore to have respect to the covenant, is nothing less or more than that he would fulfil his own declarations respecting the protection, growth and establishment of his church ; that he would spare his people, and *not give his heritage to reproach ;* that he would completely justify the confidence of his people, by bringing to pass all the predicted wonders of his grace, and in causing his name and his praise to be glorious throughout the world. He hath promised that *the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.* This covenant he hath repeated in a multitude of instances, and hath declared concerning his Son, that " he shall see his seed, he shall " prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in " his hands. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be " satisfied." His church therefore is secured abundantly by the promises of God : and his having " *respect* to the covenant," is carrying these promises into full and ultimate effect.—Let us now as proposed,

III. Contemplate the argument by which the Psalmist urges this " respect to the covenant."

The argument is taken from a view of the unenlightened and idolatrous parts of the earth ; where every species of iniquity and horrid impiety prevails. He particularly states the rage, impetuosity and distress which accompany such a state, and grow out of such ignorance and barbarity. " For the dark places of the " earth are full of the habitations of cruelty."—Men, untaught in the holy principles of revealed religion, with passions unsubdued by the grace of God, and under the dominion of depraved and turbulent lusts, are in their practices oppressive and violent ; they trespass on the rights of others, and bid defiance to the laws of justice and mercy ; trample on the sacred maxims of humanity, and riot in the spoils of fraudulent extortion ; wrest from their fellow-men the privileges conferred on them by the God of nature, and display an imbittered hostility against their own species. In short, they establish rules which in their operation are calculated

to degrade and distress their fellow-men ; subject themselves and their brethren around not only to inconvenience, but to actual suffering, and display human nature in a disgusting and terrific point of light. I might notice the wars and confusions which have prevailed among the nations, and spread devastation and ruin through populous and extensive regions. These, as an inspired penman remarks, James iv. 1. "*Come of the lusts of men, that war in their members.*" And while these lusts prevail, such evils will continue to exist. In every age they have contributed to make this earth an Aceldama and a Golgotha. Ah ! my brethren, when shall the Prince of peace sway his sceptre, and drive discord with all the evils of mutual destruction from among men ? All whose breasts are warmed with benevolence, and who pant for the security and happiness of their kindred associates, will lift up an earnest cry, and say, "Come, Lord Jesus, come "quickly." But it is not my design so much to speak of "wars "and fightings," which have so often desolated kingdoms and empires ; which have spread devastation through the world, and filled the abodes of men with tears and groans. For these, however cruel, have not been confined to what are denominated "the "dark places of the earth." They have shed their pestilential influence, and multiplied their horrors among nations professedly enlightened, and among whom the true religion hath obtained. Though at the same time they are not to be imputed to the influence of religion on the hearts and lives of men, but often to the hostility against it which rages in the human breast, and calls forth the rancor of the human soul.

By the conduct of man, even when taught the knowledge of the true God, and the blessed maxims of his holy word, it hath sufficiently appeared, that "men love darkness rather than light, "because their deeds are evil." But the cruelty of irreligion, or of idolatry and superstition, may sufficiently appear from other sources. There is a principle or bias in human nature, which leads men to adopt, and practise almost any other religion, rather than the true.

Hence the most extravagant sentiments have been embraced and the most abominable practices countenanced, under the name and garb of religion. Superstitious, impure and cruel rites, have been introduced. And, under the sanction of these rites, customs

the most abhorrent to nature, and the most replete with vileness and barbarity, have gone into the forms of devotion and morality, debasing the virtue of the heathen world, and overwhelming vast countries with lewdness and murder. Even the sports and diversions of heathen nations, have manifested an unnatural apathy with respect to human dignity, and human happiness. The brutal creation, in the wildest parts of it, hath been outdone in deeds of ferocity and cruelty by those who have claimed distinction on the scale of rationality and civilization. The gymnastic exercises, and the gladiatorial sports, have occasioned inconceivable distress, among refined, but unenlightened nations. They have issued in the mangling, decrepitude and death of thousands and thousands of the poor deluded and infatuated sons of men.

But I come more directly to the religions which have been eminently marked with cruelty and blood. These are found in Pagan, Mahometan and Popish countries. The latter, which goes under the name of Popery, or the Catholic religion, hath exhibited more scenes of horror than I am able or willing to describe. Human nature shudders, and benevolence weeps, at the retrospect, which presents the scarlet colored woman, arrayed in her appropriate ensigns, and decked with the signals of her unparalleled impiety. Most appropriate is the frontispiece, which announces her to be, "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of "harlots, and abominations of the earth." This monster of vice and cruelty which is no other than the Roman Catholic church, is represented as being drunken with the "blood of the saints, "and with the blood of the martyrs, of Jesus." Scarcely can we do less, when we view her in this light, than with the apocalyptic writer, "wonder with great admiration."—Persecutions, commenced and carried on with diabolical fervor and rage, have crimsoned the earth, with more blood, and occasioned more distress, than my pen can describe, my tongue utter, or my imagination, without pain, conceive.

Thousands and millions, of poor sufferers, have groaned at the stake, expired on the scaffold, and been tortured, even in the agonies of death, by every engine, and in every method which ingenuity, malice and cruelty could invent. The inquisition hath teemed with blood, and raged with decapitation.—Those who are termed heretics, or protestants, are not indulged the common rights

of other citizens; their persons and property are liable to proscription, and with them, according to an article of the Catholic religion, no faith is to be kept.

There are also penances, pilgrimages and a variety of impositions, which in many instances, can be termed nothing short of cruel. But I choose to confine myself principally to acts of violence. These are sufficient to show, that cruelty in an high degree is attached to this form of religion. But after all, the highest measures of cruelty are those which respect the spiritual condition of men. The body of the people are designedly kept in ignorance, and the most barefaced impositions are practised on the deluded multitude, in regard to the future and endless concerns of their immortal souls. Blind-folded by the sacrilegious arts of their corrupt and designing teachers, they are led on to destruction. On the whole, therefore, we must conclude that the places, where these things prevail, are "dark places of the earth," and "full "of the habitations of cruelty."

I must not however stop here; but take a view of the Mahometans and Pagans.—These, together with the Jews, are supposed to constitute more than three quarters of the human race. By a computation which hath been made, (how recently I cannot tell,) the whole globe is reckoned to contain eight hundred and ninety-six millions of inhabitants. Of these it is computed, that two hundred and sixteen millions are Christians, or go under that name; ten millions are Jews; two hundred and ten millions are Mahometans, and four hundred and sixty millions are Pagans. Of this vast number, less than one third are denominated Christians. And of these only fifty millions are reckoned to be Protestants; forty-seven millions are of the Greek church and Armenians; one hundred and nineteen millions are Catholics.

According to this calculation, the Catholics are more than four times the number of Protestants; and these last constitute but a little more than one-eighteenth part of the whole number of inhabitants on this globe. I will not contend that this is an accurate calculation; but I am ready to conceive that as it respects the proportion, it differs not materially from the truth. In this view of the matter, what melancholy reflections must arise in the mind of a considerate and sober person, when he admits the thought that such vast multitudes are living in ignorance of God,

and of the way of salvation through Jesus Christ! In the view of a Christian, or a believer in divine revelation, who admits of, or acknowledges no true light but what comes from the word of God, the whole Pagan world, who are more than half that inhabit this globe, and with them all the Mahometan nations, must be reckoned as inhabiting "the dark places of the earth;" dark in regard to religious knowledge; dark with respect to moral virtue; and no less dark in regard to future prospects. And let us consider, they are not only dark, but distinguished above all others for deeds of cruelty. Look at the Mahometan imposture, and consider how it hath established, and doth still support itself by the sword! Look at Pagan idolatry, and see what horrid rites it sanctioned and enjoined! Of the Grecians it is recorded, that among them "Children which were deformed or of a bad consti- "tution were murdered. This inhuman custom," saith a correct and elegant writer, (Fuller,) "was common all over Greece: so "much so, that it was reckoned a singular thing among the The- "bans that the law forbad any Theban to expose his infant under "pain of death."

"The Romans were allowed by Romulus to destroy all their "female children, except the eldest; and even with regard to "their male children, if they were deformed or monstrous, he "permitted the parents to expose them, after having shewn them "to five of their nearest neighbors. Such things were in com- "mon use amongst them, and celebrated upon their theatres."— This shows the taste and temper of the people. And it is further added, "Such was their cruelty to their slaves, that it was not "unusual for the masters to put such of them as were old, sick "and infirm into an island in the Tiber, where they left them to "perish. So far did some of them carry their luxury and wanton- "ness as to drown them in the fish ponds, that they might be de- "voured by the fish, to make the flesh more delicate."—In regard to the gladiatory shows, the same writer observes, that "So fre- "quent did they become, that no war, it is said, caused such slaugh- "ter of mankind as did these sports of pleasure, throughout the seve- "ral provinces of the Roman empire. Human sacrifices were offer- "ed up in almost all heathen countries. Children were burnt alive "by their own parents to Baal, Moloch and other deities. The "Carthaginians, in times of public calamity, not only burnt alive

" the children of the best families to Saturn, and that by hun-
" dreds, but sometimes sacrificed themselves in the same manner
" in great numbers."

It might be easy to point out among the Chinese, the Hindoos, and other eastern countries a variety of the vilest and most atrocious practices; but I shall confine myself to those properly denominated *cruel*. The Rev. Claudius Buchanan, whose services as a missionary in the East Indies are extensively known and admired in the Christian world, in his " Memoir of the Expediency " of an Ecclesiastical establishment for British India," states a variety of practices among the Hindoos, which a Christian cannot fail to consider as being in a peculiar manner cruel. He says, " Children are sacrificed by their parents to Gunga; they are " hung up on trees in baskets and devoured by birds of prey. " Female infants among the Rajpoot Hindoos are destroyed by " starving. Men and women drown themselves in the Ganges, at " the places reputed holy. They devote themselves to death by " falling under the wheels of the machine which carries their " gods. Widows are *burned* alive with their deceased husbands. " Widows are *buried* alive with their deceased husbands. Persons " supposed to be dying are immersed in the river. There is also " among them the inhuman practice of swinging with hooks pas-
" sed through the integuments of the back; and likewise dancing " with threads, canes or bamboos passed through the sides. Spits " or other instruments of iron are passed through the tongue or " forehead. Falling from a height on sharp instruments, and " climbing naked a tree armed with horrid thorns; also swinging " over a fire." All these practices obtain among these poor, deluded, superstitious and idolatrous people. Do you not pity their blindness? Do you not commiserate their wretchedness?—In the year 1804, it is stated on good authority, that in the course of six months, and within thirty miles round Calcutta, the number of women who were burned alive on the funeral pile with their deceased husbands, was one hundred and sixteen; making an average number of nearly twenty per month. By an account taken in 1803, the number of women sacrificed during that year within thirty miles round Calcutta, was two hundred and seventy-five.—This horrid practice, with many others, bespeaks an high degree of blindness, stupidity and delusion, inhumanity and monstrous

depravity. Who will hesitate to say, that where these things prevail are to be found "the dark places of the earth," and that the Psalmist is correct when he says they are "full of the habi- "tations of cruelty?" Would the time allow, I might add to this frightful picture. But your patience, already put to a severe trial would be exhausted were I to extend the detail to one half the miseries which spread over a benighted world. The horrors with which the French revolution hath been encrimsoned, form a view at which benevolence sickens and sympathy weeps. The atheistical darkness which overspread that portion of the earth, and chilled with its deadening glooms every noble sentiment of the soul was more palpable than Egyptian night, and issued in more horrors than Rama or Bethlehem ever beheld or deplored. Rachel might weep again, and Bethlehem's nurseries be emptied of all their smiling hopes, without reaching the heights of Parisian butchery and Gallic distress. The stains on that nation are more deeply tinged than the Leopard's spots, and blackened with more vivid darkness than the Ethiopian's skin. To their moral character may be applied those words of poetic crimination which offer to us a scriptural description of human nature in the following form:

"No bleeding bird, nor bleeding beast,
"Nor hyssop branch, nor sprinkling priest,
"Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea,
"Can wash the dismal stain away."

I might look on the state of the poor heathen on our borders, and announce to you the cruelties which are attached to their forms of government, forms of religion and modes of life. I might also lead you through the trackless and howling wilderness, till our eyes were fixed on some of our frontier settlements, where moral darkness and human wretchedness intermingle and produce hideous monsters of distress. But I must only glance at these things, and leave them to be pursued by your own inquiries and reflections. Enough perhaps has been said to enforce the argument which prompts to the earnest plea, in which all good people must unite, that God would "have respect to the covenant."—These dark and doleful regions where cruelty erects her standard, and not only makes an occasional encampment, but a fixed resi-

dence ; and which have, not merely a few of her tents, but are *full of her habitations* where she remains and triumphs at large ; these, these, my brethren, are places which need to be visited with divine light and grace. These, these, above all others, are objects of attention with the benevolent and the prayerful. Forcible is the reason which urges the request, that God would arise and have mercy on the nations; that he would remember the covenant with Abraham and the covenant with his son; that he would cause the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder, effectually restrain.

What shall I say then, my brethren, in an APPLICATION of this subject ?

Is there nothing for us to do? Are there no measures for us to adopt ? Have we no call to duty ? And must we embrace the stupifying and the anti-christian doctrine that we must lie still and let God do his own work ? Will it be competent in this case to plead that the decrees of God are in the way, and nothing we can do will alter his purposes, or change the face of society ?— Lie down, then, in this loathsome pond of avarice, and gather into the niggardly form of a fatalist and a self-devotee, but never call yourself a *Christian,* nor ever again attempt to rank with rational beings or philanthropists. The gospel breathes a different spirit ; the gospel proclaims a different sentiment ; the gospel brightens with a different hope ; the gospel glows with a different fervor. Come to the help of the Lord against the mighty ; espouse the cause of omnipotent grace, and fight the battles of the Lord, is the voice of inspired truth to all the real lovers of Zion. And if compassion for your fellow-creatures, or regard for the glory of God has any dominion, or any existence in your breasts, you will not be idle spectators of all this affecting scene. You will at least lift up your cry to God, and say, Have mercy upon Zion ; have mercy upon the world of mankind ; fulfil thine own gracious purposes, and speedily " have respect to the *covenant.*" Nor will your prayers be all. Correspondent exertions will be put forth, and you will cheerfully bear a part in sending the gospel to the remotest ends of the earth. Your benevolence will be expansive, and embrace the whole family of man. Your liberality will say to the harbingers of truth and to the heralds of salvation, " Go

" ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Your desire will be that the dark places of the earth may be enlightened by the cheering rays of divine truth, and that the Sun of righteousness may arise with healing in his wings. Missionaries you will be disposed to seek and send forth completely furnished with the luminous armor of the cross, and replenished with that knowledge of God and Christ which shall invigorate them in the service of men's souls, and prepare them " *to do exploits*" in the vineyard of the Lord. Say not that you are unable, and that it will do no good. Say rather, if you make no efforts, you are unwilling and spiritless. " Two mites which make a farthing," may put it in your power to acquire immortal fame on the records of Christian benevolence. Let not a poor widow, who of her penury cast in all her living, any longer shame the whole Christian world, and be entitled to the highest evangelical eulogy. At least be her competitor or her associate in the dignities which pertain to acts of unstinted beneficence ; and while the rich of their abundance cast into the treasures of the Lord, much of their substance, outdo them all by giving according to your ability, with a willing mind and a liberal hand. The Lord who witnesses such displays of charity, and watches every movement, will discover this act, and though it should fail of being proclaimed " *wherever this gos-* " *pel is preached*," yet it shall be proclaimed at the august tribunal of Jesus Christ, and shall in no wise lose its reward. Can a child of benevolence be otherwise than impatient to relieve the distresses under which his brethren groan ? And will he grudge a few dimes or dollars to drive darkness and cruelty from among men ? When we look over the Pagan, Mahometan and Catholic countries, what calls to Christian charity lift up their united and commanding voice ! All Christendom should be alive to these moving calls, and in the expedition to reclaim the world, and plant the standard of the cross on heathen or infidel ground, all should go forth embodied, and leave not a hoof behind. Do you ask whether the founder of our religion was charitable ? I reply, look to the thickening wonders of Mount Calvary. There behold the price paid for your redemption, and remember that you are redeemed not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without spot. Do you ask again whether he was liberal ? I remind you that though " he

" was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through " his poverty might be rich."

Subscribe to the correctness of this statement and you bar yourself for ever against the doctrine of a selfish religion; you admit at once, that disinterested benevolence has existence, and forms the basis of our religion. Only consider then in this point of view, that " if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his." Christ gave himself for you, and will you give no part of your substance for him? He died for his enemies, and will you do nothing to relieve the distresses, remove the ignorance, and save the souls of your fellow-men? Methinks, when you consider your privileges, and the miserable state of your fellow-men, you must pant for an opportunity to cast in your mite. When the address to your compassion and tenderness is so plain and so pungent, can you withhold from the receivers of religious contribution? Can you be easy to lock up your coffers and let the sandall'd Missionaries of the cross go famishing, to the abodes of idolatrous and wicked men? When " the harvest is great, and the laborers are few," will you not pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into his vineyard, and also bid them God-speed, by furnishing them with means of subsistence? A small part of Europe is alive on this subject, and from England are pouring forth streams of Christian liberality. Bible Societies and Missionary Societies, greatly multiplied, are doing wonders; and wonderful is their success! Shall America and the free-born sons of a christianized land in which we dwell be less active, when all around the objects of this charity rise to view! At least provide for your brethren in the new and vacant settlements. Send them Bibles, and send them Ministers. They will thank you, and the Lord will reward you. Where the love of Jesus and the love of souls begin to operate, is it too much to expect or require that some will step forth and say, " Lord, the one half of my goods I give to the poor" heathen; and if I have withheld in any instance from the reasonable demands of charity, I offer restitution by advancing " fourfold?" Already Zion groans under the weight of an avaricious and worldly spirit. She needs to be comforted. She asks of her sons and daughters to give her enlargement, that she may break forth on the right hand and on the left. The unbelief and stupidity of professors keep her from rising. If her children shall awake and

provide for her nourishment, the prophetic mandate will be obeyed, and the prophetic splendor will appear which these words announce, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the "Lord is risen upon thee." From all the horrid persecutions of infidel malice and satanic rage, she will emerge with the Captain of her salvation in front, and again will be repeated those solemn words of astonishment and grace, "Who is this that cometh from "Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah: this, that is glorious "in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?— "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

If at such a time, when the glory of the church shall appear, and her majestic attitude shall so awe the beholders around, that "Kings shall cast down their crowns," will you delay to cast down your offerings of silver and gold, that such blessedness may be experienced among men? O my beloved brethren, do not sit mute, or be inactive on such an occasion. First give yourselves to the Lord, and then surrender your substance to him. It is your reasonable service. It is your incumbent and indispensable duty. Dispense as much as his cause plainly requires, and hold all the rest at his wise, holy and sovereign disposal. Do good on a liberal scale. Relieve the distresses of your fellow-men, and send an exterminating light into those "dark places of the earth," where cruelty has her multiplied abodes. Fly to the funeral pile, and snatch the deluded and devoted victim from the devouring element. Pay the price of aiding in the deliverance and salvation of one poor benighted soul. Give wings to the angels which hover over the abodes of Zion, and let them fly through the midst of heaven to preach the everlasting gospel to them that dwell on the earth. While your hearts and hands are employed in administering every needed supply to carry on the glorious work, let your voice be heard, saying, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, "and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory "shall come in."—Yet let not your charities, however liberal, elate you with pride or self-confidence. Humbly bow before the God you serve, and confess, "All things come of thee; and of "thine own have we given thee.— The silver is mine and the "gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts." Do not then withhold. It is sacrilege—it is robbery. And "will a man rob God?" Oh, remember that the liberal deviseth "liberal things, and by liberal

" things shall he stand." Yea, " The liberal soul shall be made " fat." For your encouragement it is declared, " The Lord loveth " a cheerful giver." If you will do thus, Ethiopia will more fully stretch out her hands unto God, and the isles " shall wait for his " law." The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the " desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." This earth will become the peaceable habitation of righteousness, and the happy times predicted in the oracles of truth, and anticipated with joy by the people of God, shall commence, when shall be fulfilled this animating prophecy, " And I will rejoice in Jeru- " salem and joy in my people, and the voice of weeping shall be " no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying."—" They shall " not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."